


Say what?

A person,
not a population



*Hey Lin, can you
make some signs with
Chinese characters
that have inspirational
sayings for the office?*



*News flash, not
all Asians are
Chinese!*

Unconscious bias may result in our grouping huge populations into small stereotypes of who we think they are. Being person-centered means we take the time to allow people to tell their own story and describe their own interests, talents, and experiences.

Curious about being person-centered?

To learn more, go to: www.dshs.wa.gov/dao/campaign.shtml



Washington State
Department of Social
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DSHS is committed to Diversity and Inclusion

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious or implicit bias refers to attitudes or stereotypes that affect our beliefs, behaviors, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, both positive and negative, turn on without our awareness or intentional control.

Feelings and attitudes about people often attach to our subconscious biases based on characteristics such as race, age, sexual orientation, and appearance. These biases develop over a lifetime, starting at an early age.

Facts about Unconscious Biases:

- Everyone has them.
- Unconscious biases may not align with our values and commitments.
- Unconscious bias is not intentionally malicious or intended to harm or slight anyone.
- Unconscious biases have real-world effects on our behavior and impact on others.
- Unconscious biases often favor our own “in-group”.
- Biases are malleable. We can undo our biases.

Rethinking Unconscious Bias

We must be willing to identify and challenge biases that cause us to think and act in ways that do not align with our values and commitments.

Rethinking requires:

- **Exposure:** Means interacting with and building rapport with diverse people.
- **Intergroup contact:** Interactions that eliminate power imbalances and include all voices.
- **Education and training:** About unconscious bias and about counter-stereotyping.
- **Personal accountability:** Willingness to admit and challenge internal bias.
- **Diverse perspectives:** Welcoming and intentionally including contrasting viewpoints.
- **Deliberative processing:** Think about your thinking! In systems with automatic power differentials such as social services, professionals are encouraged to examine their biases and monitor their decision-making.

Identifying unconscious bias is not about assigning blame or taking on shame. It is about personal accountability. The people who successfully eliminate or reduce personal bias are people committed to doing so.

A free training toolkit on unconscious bias in a workplace setting, “**Five Points for Progress**,” is available online at:

<http://raceforopportunity.bitc.org.uk/tools-case-studies/toolkits/five-5-points-progress-toolkit-knowyourself-unconscious-bias-tool>

To read the full **State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2014**, go to:

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-implicit-bias.pdf>



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